

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1           1.       A method for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, comprising a  
2 computer system and a printer, said method comprising:  
3           inputting by a user into said kiosk a request for said postage stamp;  
4           sending said request to a server via a communications network;  
5           receiving from said server a markup language response;  
6           processing said markup language response to obtain an indicium, said  
7 indicium comprising a digital signature; and  
8           printing said indicium by said printer on a label to obtain said postage stamp.
- 1           2.       The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response  
2 comprises a logical structure having customizable constraints.
- 1           3.       The method of claim 2 wherein said customizable constraints include a  
2 Document Type Declaration (DTD).
- 1           4.       The method of claim 1 further comprising validating said markup  
2 language request using a response markup language declaration.
- 1           5.       The method of claim 4 wherein said markup language response  
2 declaration is an element type declaration in a Document Type Declaration (DTD).
- 1           6.       The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response is an  
2 extensible markup language (XML) response.
- 1           7.       The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response  
2 comprises a statement of a markup language selected from a group consisting of HTML,  
3 XML, or SGML.
- 1           8.       The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response is a  
2 Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) response.
- 1           9.       The method of claim 1 wherein said markup language response  
2 includes a transaction identifier (TID).
- 1           10.      The method of claim 1 wherein when said printer is printing said  
2 indicium on a label, displaying a moving image on a display.

1           11.    The method of claim 1 wherein when said printer is printing said  
2 indicium on said label, displaying an image on a display.

1           12.    A method for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, comprising a  
2 computer system and a printer, said method comprising:

3               inputting by a user into said kiosk a request for said postage stamp and  
4 payment information;

5               sending said request and said payment information to a server via a  
6 communications network;

7               receiving from said server an XML response;

8               processing said XML response to obtain an indicium, said indicium  
9 comprising a digital signature; and

10              printing said indicium by said printer on a label to obtain said postage stamp,  
11 said label comprising one or more security features.

12           13.    The method of claim 12 further comprising:

13               said server receiving a XML request comprising said request and said payment  
14 information;

15               processing said XML request to obtain said request and said payment  
16 information;

17               validating said payment information; and

18               responsive to said validating, generating said indicium based on said request.

1           14.    The method of claim 13 wherein said XML request further includes a  
2 GXG postage type.

1           15.    The method of claim 13 wherein said XML request further includes a  
2 customer transaction identifier (CTID).

1           16.    An electronic kiosk for a user obtaining a postage stamp from a central  
2 server via a communications network, said electronic kiosk comprising:

3               a processor operating on software stored in a memory, said software  
4 comprising a markup language processor for reading a markup language document  
5 comprising an indicium;

6               a housing having said display, said processor, and said memory;

7 network interface circuitry (NIC) connecting said processor to said  
8 communications network, said NIC for receiving said markup language document; and  
9 a printer coupled to said memory for printing said stamp using said indicium.

1 17. The electronic kiosk of claim 16 wherein said markup language  
2 document is an XML document.

1 18. The electronic kiosk of claim 16 further comprising a display showing  
2 a browser window for postage stamps.

1 19. The electronic kiosk of claim 16 wherein said software further  
2 comprises a browser module and an ID module that validates a first kiosk ID at the kiosk  
3 with a second kiosk ID at said central server.

1 20. The electronic kiosk of claim 19 wherein said first kiosk ID is stored in  
2 a window's registry.

1 21. The electronic kiosk of claim 19 wherein said first kiosk ID is a MAC  
2 address of said NIC.

1 22. A method for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, comprising a  
2 processor, a magnetic card reader, a touch screen display, and a printer, said method  
3 comprising:

4 receiving a request for said postage stamp via said touch screen display;  
5 receiving payment information from said magnetic card reader;  
6 forming an XML request comprising said request and said payment  
7 information  
8 sending said XML request to a server via a communications network;  
9 said server validating said XML request using a request DTD;  
10 processing said XML request to obtain said request and said payment  
11 information;  
12 validating said payment information;  
13 responsive to said validating, generating an indicium based on said request;  
14 said indicium including a digital signature;  
15 forming an XML response comprising said indicium;  
16 receiving from said server said XML response;

17 validating said XML response using a response DTD ;  
18 processing said XML response to obtain said indicium; and  
19 printing said indicium by said printer on a label, said label comprising security  
20 features.

1 23. The method of claim 22 wherein when said printer is printing said  
2 indicium on said label, displaying a portion of a video clip on said touch screen display.

1 24. The method of claim 22 wherein when said printer is printing said  
2 indicium on said label, displaying an image on said touch screen display.

1 25. A method of obtaining a postage stamp from a kiosk, said kiosk  
2 comprising a processor and a printer, said method comprising:  
3 obtaining a sequence of characters upon paying for said postage stamp at a  
4 cash register;  
5 inputting said sequence of characters into said kiosk;  
6 sending a XML request for said postage stamp to a server;  
7 receiving a XML response comprising an indicium; and  
8 printing said indicium, by said printer on a pre-processed label to obtain said  
9 postage stamp.

1 26. The method of claim 18 wherein said pre-processed label includes one  
2 or more security features.

1 27. A computer program product stored in a computer readable medium  
2 for obtaining a postage stamp at a kiosk, said kiosk, comprising a computer system and a  
3 printer, said computer program product comprising:  
4 code for receiving a request for said postage stamp;  
5 code for sending said request to a server via a communications network;  
6 code for receiving from said server a markup language response;  
7 code for processing said markup language response using a markup language  
8 response declaration to obtain an indicium representing said postage stamp, said indicium  
9 comprising a digital signature; and  
10 code for printing said indicium by said printer on a label.

1                    28.     The method of claim 27 wherein said markup language response is an  
2     extensible markup language (XML) response.

"Patented" 09/20/00